

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please insert the following paragraph at page 1, line 17:

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

According to an example embodiment of the present invention, a method of routing data packets of a plurality of data flows  $f_1$ - $f_n$ , in a stream  $S$ , carried on a transmission media operating at a first data rate  $R$ , through a switching system that is comprised of  $K$  parallel switching pathways operating at a second data rate substantially equal to  $R/K$ , wherein  $K$  is an integer value of two or greater, includes assigning a first data flow  $f_1$  in said stream  $S$  to a first switching path comprised of a first data buffer having an output coupled to a corresponding first switching fabric. After said step of assigning a first data flow  $f_1$ , data packets of at least said first data flow  $f_1$  are routed to said first switching path. Upon the determination of a first condition, at least some of the data packets of said first data flow  $f_1$  are assigned to a second switching path. The at least some data packets of said first data flow  $f_1$  are routed to said second switching pathway to a second buffer coupled to a second switching fabric.